

# THE LEISURE HOUR.

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"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cowper.*



MR. PUREFOY'S ERRAND.

## THE MASTER OF AYNHOE.

BY MRS. PROSSER.

CHAPTER VIII.—AT HEAD-QUARTERS.

For once conjecture was borne out by facts. Mr. Purefoy had ordered a chaise, forgotten all about it, and started on foot for the place to which it was to have conveyed him. For after Annie's earnest appeal to him about the schoolmaster, he had written to his friend Mr. Constant to send for him, and carrying on his heart the impression her voice had made through-

out the evening, had gone to bed with his mind full of the undertaking of the following day. The subject had pursued him in his dreams, which presented to him, not Annie, not old William and his son, but those whose memories had been awakened, if they could be said to have ever slumbered!

He awoke before dawn, fevered and excited, unable for some time to recall the source of his disturbance; but an old letter from Mr. Constant bearing his address—from which, indeed, he had learned it the day before—threw some light on his

perplexity, for it still lay on his table by his writing-case, and he gradually recalled a part of his day's programme: he was to see Mr. Constant that he might stop Sir Lucas in his designs on the school. So, wholly oblivious of the chaise which he had begged him to send, he sallied forth, after a very scanty breakfast, glad of the morning air and still fair country, to soothe his troubled spirit and cool his burning brow. Few were on the road at that early hour, but all who were, gazed with curiosity at his singular figure as he strode along, generally chanting some favourite strain, his eyes looking upwards as if he were holding converse with another and an invisible world.

Happily, the road was straight, without any offshoot or deviation, so that unless he went over a hedge he could not possibly lose his way. He walked on and on till he grew very weary, and his long back bent, and his face lost its energy, and he had a vague idea that he was in very unpropitious circumstances, without clearly remembering at all times how he came into them.

At length he reached the town, and most fortunately for him the house of his friend Mr. Constant stood at the entrance of it; a goodly house it was, of white stone, with shrubberies about it. Having been assured by several of whom he had inquired that he was at the right place, he rang the bell, and was admitted by a servant, full of curious admiration, to the hall.

"Your card, sir?" said the man, taking a good survey as he spoke.

"Card!" said Mr. Purefoy, "oh, give him this;" and he placed in his hand, as he thought, Mr. Constant's letter, which he had brought with him as a help to his memory in finding his house.

In another minute Mr. Constant was in the hall, exclaiming, "Mr. Purefoy! what, on foot?"

"On foot? yes," replied the weary man, not rising from the chair he had immediately sunk into.

"I didn't expect you yet; I ordered the chaise to be at Aynhoe at noon, supposing that would suit your hours, and I was just now going to my office to be at liberty to meet you on its return."

"Chaise!" said Mr. Purefoy, pressing his hand against his forehead; "did you send a chaise?"

"I ordered one—you told me—have you forgotten it?" said Mr. Constant, smiling.

"I forget everything—but what I would forget," said Mr. Purefoy, in a tone of deep dejection.

"Well, we will adjourn to pleasanter quarters," said Mr. Constant, leading the way to his own private room, where he ordered refreshments to be brought.

The easy-chair in which he placed his visitor had a soothing effect on him; he closed his eyes, leaned back, and seemed satisfied with having arrived at the place of destination; of any further intentions he had evidently at present no recollection. But he roused himself to eat and drink, and when his vigour seemed somewhat restored, the lawyer began to think it was time to have some clue to what he had come for. Now Mr. Purefoy was no wine-drinker, and his friend's sherry, of which he took two or three glasses, had a powerful effect on him; he grew talkative to a degree wonderful for him, but all that he said was quite irrelevant to his business, or to any business that Mr. Constant could discover.

So after having for some time tried in vain to extract from him his errand, he got a little out of patience at the loss of a precious hour, and said,—

"What have you come for, Mr. Purefoy?"

"What have I come for?" repeated Mr. Purefoy, looking at his long dusty legs, crossed now as they were when he was in his attitude for playing.

"Ay, I wish you could hit on it," said Mr. Constant, "I must see Sir Lucas Flood at three o'clock to-day, and I have other appointments before and after, and time wears."

"Sir Lucas Flood! it is Sir Lucas Flood I come about," gasped Mr. Purefoy, as the light began to break in upon him.

"Oh, that is capital! a lucky stroke of mine; now we shall get on," said the lawyer, rubbing his hands. "I dare say you think it better, now that your foreign property has sold so well, to take up the mortgages on some of the land in Aynhoe. I meant to come to you about it; indeed, you leave too much responsibility on the hands of your legal advisers, Mr. Purefoy."

"Sir Lucas Flood," ejaculated Mr. Purefoy, as if the only chance of getting hold of the rest was to keep possession of that name.

"Well, what of him?" asked the lawyer; "I hear he is going to make a great figure in Aynhoe, to reform the school, and—"

"The school, the school," cried Mr. Purefoy, "he must not touch the school;" then, having got a clue to the whole of his mission, he enlarged on the injury the baronet was about to inflict on Aynhoe so eloquently that Mr. Constant wished he would spare himself, since half of what he said would have sufficed for instructions.

"And I am to go to Sir Lucas about it? Why don't you go? It wasn't a week ago that he and Lady Flood were lamenting that you should bury yourself alive like a hermit; and really, now that you have no excuse on the score of income, it does seem to me a pity, and I may say wrong—yes, wrong—a desertion of your social duties—don't you think so?"

Think what? Mr. Purefoy never heard more than half a long speech, through the habit of abstraction he had got into with Mrs. Wickbury, so he replied to the part he had heard.

"I cannot see them—no! but they owe me something; I would have them remember it now, and, for my sake, leave Aynhoe unmolested."

"I really believe they have no intention to molest Aynhoe," said Mr. Constant, in some surprise; "but I will speak to Sir Lucas, tell him all you say (if you won't see him yourself), and bring you the result; for of course you will dine with us, and my man shall drive you home in the evening."

Mr. Purefoy assented; that is, he did not offer any objection; there was a spell on him while he sat in that chair, his back yet aching with his unaccustomed exertion.

"And now, while I am absent, you will join my wife and daughters in the drawing-room," continued Mr. Constant, "and give them a little musical lecture if you will, it is all the fashion here, and they will be delighted with 'intonation' and 'recitation' and 'mediation,' and know all about it."

As Mr. Constant spoke, he returned the paper Mr. Purefoy had sent in to him as his letter, which proved to be a lesson containing the above terms which he had written for Annie on the parts of the chant, but had forgotten to give her.

"Ah!" exclaimed Mr. Purefoy, "this is for—yes—I forgot it."

Mr. Constant waited to escort him to the drawing-

room; but seeing he made no movement, he said, "You will perhaps like to rest longer before you go; touch that bell when you are disposed to move, and my man will take you to my dressing-room to refresh yourself a little, and when I return I hope to find you quite rested."

A languid smile was the only answer he received, for Mr. Purefoy's eyes were fixed on the paper in his hands, and he began to hum the notes he had written down.

"Poor fellow! What a sad thing that such noble powers should have been so miserably overthrown," said Mr. Constant, as he drove towards Flood Hall.

His visit there was upon electioneering business: Sir Lucas meant to stand for the north division of the county on the approaching dissolution of Parliament.

"I have been asleep in some respects, I admit," he said, as Mr. Constant laid before him various fields and plans for exertion; "but I am doing something in several hitherto neglected parts of my property—Aynhoe, for instance. Soper is a sharp fellow; he has been there, and he tells me they only want a little notice to be staunch for me; so he is going in my name to reform their old drony school, and to promise a little help to the tradespeople. I have it down somewhere how many votes I may depend on there."

"Are you sure that Soper is all right?" asked Mr. Constant.

"All right? *Soper*?—one of the most intelligent, shrewd, active fellows in the world; not over-particular, perhaps, when he has an end in view; but it's not my place just now to be too nice in inquiry, as his hearty desire is to carry my election."

Mr. Constant looked sceptical, and repeated, "Are you sure he is all right?"

"What do you mean?" asked the baronet.

"I mean that I think he is not the man you take him for, and I will show it to you."

And he did show to Sir Lucas plain proof that this man, who had been raised from the post of village schoolmaster to his present place, had acted in several instances with ostensible zeal for his master's interest, but with a real devotion to his own, to the baronet's injury.

"Then you believe him to be a rogue?" said the baronet, quite disconcerted at the discovery made to him, for he had had great faith in his plausible servant.

"I believe he is more unscrupulous than you are aware of, and *that* not for your sake but his own," said Mr. Constant; "but, like many sharp wits, he is but shallow, and a very little investigation will show that you have been deceived in him."

Sir Lucas rose to ring the bell.

"What are you going to do?" asked the lawyer.

"Send for Soper, he is in the house writing letters; he has just returned from Aynhoe."

"Stop," said the lawyer; "pardon me, don't judge him till you have proof; let him condemn himself. I am in possession of the whole of what he has been doing at Aynhoe, and of what the people think of it, so I can bring him to book if his story shows he is playing false there."

"Very true," said the baronet, growing calm, and ringing.

Mr. Soper himself appeared in answer to the summons; but not the swaggering, all-important Mr. Soper, who had so troubled and overawed the simple folks of Aynhoe. With a vacillating eye and a varying expression, bowing and smiling with great

obsequiousness, he entered the room, his hands full of letters.

If he had known that Mr. Constant was there he would have deferred his visit, for he did not like Mr. Constant.

But it was too late, and seeing it was so, he bowed and cringed to the lawyer with the same servility with which he always approached Sir Lucas.

"Oh, you have written the letters, I see," said Sir Lucas, taking them from him.

"Yes, sir," said the agent, as he styled himself, hesitating as if uncertain whether to go or stay.

"Sit down, sit down," said the baronet; "I want Mr. Constant to know what you have been doing at Aynhoe."

Mr. Soper felt as a prisoner in the dock feels when a witness whose evidence is certain to condemn him gets into the box; but there was no help for it, so he began a long story of the good disposition into which he had worked the Aynhoe people.

"But you have not told how pleased they are about the school," said the baronet.

Mr. Soper had quite forgotten the school, but he flourished now on the subject, and was as flowery and inventive as Mrs. Wickbury herself.

"But I have always heard an excellent character of the old master and his son," said Mr. Constant, looking at the agent with that straight, inquiring, truthful look so perplexing to a rogue.

"Quite past his work, sir," said Soper.

"And his son?"

"Incompetent; it is a poor school now, as I proved to the principal inhabitants," said Mr. Soper, going on now with an account of the gratitude with which the improvements to be made by Sir Lucas would be received.

"And have you appointed a new master?" inquired Mr. Constant, with the same steady, un pitying gaze.

"Sir Lucas, of course, will *appoint*," said Mr. Soper, in considerable confusion.

"But one *is* appointed, so the people have been told by you," said the lawyer.

"A slight mistake," said Soper, his face growing very red, "I said one *would* be appointed."

"Oh, they are certainly under the impression that one is appointed. Who was it you had in view?—some one very promising, according to your account."

"I thought it probable that Sir Lucas would appoint a man well qualified, who is leaving his present place," said Mr. Soper.

"At your recommendation, I have no doubt," said the lawyer; "and who is this person who stands so well in your opinion?"

"Well, sir, you are not acquainted with him, and I don't know that I need name him, since he is not appointed," said Soper, as angry as he was uncomfortable.

"It isn't your brother from Linford, I suppose?" said the lawyer.

"I don't know that there would be any objection to my brother, sir, if Sir Lucas chose to appoint him," said Soper, whose fear could hardly conquer his rage.

"Oh, we won't raise objections to candidates till the appointment becomes necessary. You have been a little out in your estimate of the inhabitants of Aynhoe; they will be very glad of *custom*, and *low rents*, and all the other good things you have promised them, but they don't wish for a new master, nor any change in the school."



Mr. Soper had nothing to say.

"I think, Sir Lucas, I am right in stating it to be your wish that the school should not be interfered with?" said Mr. Constant.

The baronet nodded, and the lawyer continued, "I will attend the meeting you have called for to-morrow, and explain to the inhabitants that the change was proposed on a misapprehension of the wishes of the place. I will deliver you from any further trouble there. I know a little of the Aynhoe people, and can set them at rest easily."

"That will do!" said Sir Lucas, with a frown, and Soper left the room in no enviable state of mind.

"Now, you see," said Mr. Constant.

"I see that he is a—"

"He has taken advantage of your implicit trust in him, that's all," said the lawyer.

"I'll get rid of him at once."

"Not till you have proved these things against him," said the lawyer, alluding to the charges he had brought.

"One dirty trick is enough; he would have sold me to get his brother the place," said Sir Lucas, angrily.

"But you don't mind a little roguery," said the lawyer, laughing.

"I mind being sold by my own fellow," said the baronet, who had no forbearance with knavery by which he suffered; "he shall go at once."

After a slight attempt on Mr. Constant's part to prevail on Sir Lucas to keep his agent, only with restricted powers, the baronet inquired whence he had got his Aynhoe information.

"From Mr. Purefoy, your old friend; he came to me this morning and talked more than I ever heard him talk before."

"Poor Purefoy! What an exertion for him! He must be much better," remarked the baronet.

"He is perhaps as well as he ever will be; he is quite as peculiar, wears the same dress, his eyes and hair are as wild, and his figure is more gaunt than ever," said Mr. Constant.

"Is he as musical?" inquired Sir Lucas.

"We couldn't wish him to be less so: what would he have been if it had not been for music?"

"What a pity it is that he so resolutely avoids us," said Sir Lucas. "I should think at this distance of time he might bear a meeting, and it would be very pleasant to me. I never forget what I owe to him, and my wife has naturally a strong regard for him; but our position since our return from abroad has been difficult. How could we thrust ourselves on him when we were given to understand that the sight of us would be attended with such tragical consequences?"

#### CHAPTER IX.—A RENEWAL OF FRIENDSHIP.

THE baronet and Mr. Constant sat talking over Mr. Purefoy for some time, and when Sir Lucas heard that he was still at the lawyer's house, he suggested that a good opportunity presented itself for breaking through the alienation of so many years. Though doubtful as to the result, Mr. Constant could not refuse to try the experiment, and Sir Lucas accompanied him home.

In their drive, the old story of their former friendship and its events came up, and Sir Lucas again described, as he had often done, with much feeling, the anguish of Mr. Purefoy when he found that while

he was saving Lady Flood, who was nearly drowned during a storm that overtook a pleasure party off Sestriss, the caravel in which was his own and only child was lost.

"Ah, poor Reginald! that was the 'distraction' you sometimes read descriptions of in romances," said Sir Lucas.

"And he had not been a widower more than a year?" asked the lawyer.

"No; and such a wife he had lost, and his little girl so like her," replied the baronet.

"I wonder he survived it," said Mr. Constant.

"For months he hung between life and death, and when he fairly returned to this world it was as a wreck—no memory, little consciousness of things around him; in fact, he lived, you might say, out of the body, with his wife and child."

"He seems more alive to other affections now," said Mr. Constant; "he speaks with much interest of many of the Aynhoe people, especially of a young lady there who sings sweetly."

"Ah, no doubt she reminds him of his child; she had an exquisite voice, like her mother."

"This music, of course, was the power that gradually soothed and restored him, as far as he is restored," remarked Mr. Constant, as the carriage entered the gates. "Shall I go first and pave the way for you?"

"No, take him by surprise," said the baronet, whose heart beat with unusual quickness as he followed the lawyer into the study, from which they had ascertained that Mr. Purefoy had not moved.

Sleep, excepting in babies, is very destructive of beauty; accordingly, when Sir Lucas stood before Reginald Purefoy, who was sleeping soundly in the easy-chair in which Mr. Constant had left him, his pulsations grew quite even, and he smiled as he whispered, "What an extraordinary figure!" Yet there was a kindling of strong feeling and compassionate gratitude within him.

"I should think he has slept long enough, in all conscience," he said, in a minute or two, being tired of waiting. "Slam the door, or drop the poker!"

But his voice did the work, and Mr. Purefoy opened his eyes and fixed them on him with a look that made him sorry he had awakened him; but it was not his way to draw back, so he seized his hand, which still held the music lesson, crying, "Did you ever see such a fellow? the first thing I find him with is a gamut! I've come all this way to comfort your heart, old friend, about this school affair at Aynhoe. The master there may flog away for the rest of his days without interruption from me, I assure you."

With a rattle on this and other subjects, Sir Lucas went on till he had nearly exhausted his inventive powers, Mr. Purefoy's face undergoing various changes of surprise, bewilderment, and pain the whole time. When, from sheer necessity, he was silent, Mr. Purefoy looked at him with a benevolent smile, and extended his hand. Not to lose the ground thus gained, Sir Lucas returned to the charge, told him his attentions to Aynhoe had been of a purely political nature, and gave him a copious account of his prospects, and what he meant to do if admitted to the House of Commons.

Mr. Purefoy listened, or seemed to do so; but it was very plain that a struggle was going on, and that he was really making a painful effort to extricate himself from scenes into which the unexpected apparition of his friend had plunged him.

"The ice is broken now; the next thing will be to get him to see my wife, and then we may hope to drag him out into daylight again; it will be a mountain off our consciences, I can assure you," said Sir Lucas to Mr. Constant, as he drove gaily from the door.

The interview, although, while it lasted, it evidently agitated Mr. Purefoy, left no painful effects; on the contrary, after a while he seemed calm and almost cheerful. He joined the ladies in the drawing-room, after having improved his appearance by all the toilet arrangements with which his host could supply him; but these, in consequence of his peculiar dress, were few; however, being entirely unconscious of any fault, he wore his *deshabille* with such easy dignity that it did not detract from the natural grace and elegance of his once fine person.

The ladies were delighted with him, after the manner of all ladies, and Mrs. Constant made a violent musical attack on him, making her daughters play long pieces with endless variations, and very noisy duets, which almost gave him a headache, and quite elicited a groan-like sigh.

Japan opened could hardly have produced a greater effect on the regions connected with it, than did the "opening of Aynhoe," through Mr. Purefoy's having become accessible, on the surrounding neighbourhood, and on Aynhoe itself. Sir Lucas and Lady Flood, with the leading gentry, determined on storming Purefoy House, and getting as much as they could of the musical miracle so eccentric and interesting that reigned there. But this belongs to the after history of Aynhoe, with which we have no concern.

What a pity that Mrs. Wickbury was gone to a farmhouse a mile off with shoes, when Mr. Constant's man put Mr. Purefoy down at his door. And there was no one else about to see him, for a meeting of the disaffected towards the Riddleys was being held at Jeremy Ferrit's, and every one likely to be on the stroll in the evening was at it.

Miss Gravit, indeed, saw him pass the window, but she said nothing about it, except to her aunt, that night, and never mentioned it to any one else the next day, till Annie told her of it in much excitement, for Miss Gravit, for so musical a person, had a calm, steady temperament, and was not given to wonder or conjecture.

Mr. Purefoy made his way up-stairs in the dark, and in the dark scrambled to his bed, which he greatly needed, and, without a single dream, slept till morning.

## THE SCOTT CENTENARY CELEBRATION.

THE Centenary of Sir Walter Scott's birthday—15th August, 1771—to be celebrated in the Scottish capital next month, will anew direct public attention to the career and productions of the great minstrel-poet and novelist. Some may demur to the propriety or the accompaniments of such displays, as partaking of the melodramatic, and as out of keeping with the serene character of literary fame. The custom has, however, been established. In our own day England has honoured Shakespeare, Scotland, Burns, and Germany, Schiller; and now in his turn Scott, as another national writer of acknowledged pre-eminence, is to receive the homage of a celebration. Putting aside what-

ever of mere tawdriness and vulgarity inevitably attends manifestations of this sort, we may yet accept them as genuine tributes of admiration, and in the case of Sir Walter Scott as an assurance that his fame is destined to no speedy eclipse, but will be lasting as it has been world-wide.

Before a writer can be held entitled to a centenary festival he must have fulfilled two main conditions. First, he must have enlisted the interest and touched the sympathies of men irrespective of nationality; and, secondly, he must not the less be national—the exponent of what is characteristic in the thoughts and cherished sentiments of his countrymen. Scott satisfies both conditions. It is, however, true that Burns and not Scott is to be regarded as the national poet of Scotland. Burns belonged to the people, and in his poems and songs gave the fullest and most impassioned utterance to their feelings and aspirations. Scott, with a patriotism as real and glowing, was yet by association and tone of thought an aristocrat, and never took such firm hold of the affections of the Scottish popular heart as did the Ayrshire ploughman. Yet Sir Walter is the pride of all Scotchmen. His genius has shed a halo over many regions of the rugged northern land, and his representations of Scottish life, manners, and character are by far the most effective and genuine portions of his writings. Quotations might be made to show his love of country, but indeed it breathes everywhere, both in his poetry and prose, and gave direction and effect to his most successful efforts. Without the Scottish borders and the Scottish Highlands, with their wealth of inspiring influences, where would have been at this day Scott's place in the ranks of British writers? Much, therefore, as he had added to the literary renown of his country, he was on the other hand largely indebted to it. His biography by Lockhart affords abundant materials for tracing the effects of the history and traditional lore of Scotland upon the development of his genius and the character of his writings. As bearing upon the centenary celebration, it may perhaps be of interest if we make the elucidation of this point the main object of our remarks in the present notice.

As to Lockhart's "Life of Scott," we may in passing remark, it is entirely explicit. Never before—if we except Boswell's "Life of Johnson"—were the details of a literary career so copiously given and so full of interest. Little that is new remains to be said either of Walter Scott or of the products of his pen. He has been, both as man and author, weighed, measured, and analysed by very competent critics; and moralists have also drawn such lessons as seemed fit from his worldly ambition and the folly and disaster to which it led. Yet the romance that attaches to Sir Walter Scott is of a perennial kind—this is proved not only by his existing popularity as a writer, but by the hosts that still make yearly pilgrimages to Abbotsford. The personal qualities he possessed commend him to the affections of his admirers. He was a lovable man, genial, strong of heart, and free from all the affectations of literature; while his social surroundings, his brilliant reputation, his marvellous gifts, and charming yet original productions, captivate the imagination, and invest Scott with an interest which the lapse of time is not, for generations yet to come, likely much to diminish.

He was born in Edinburgh in 1771, the son of a Scottish lawyer, staid in manners and a strict Presbyterian. How chanced it that this child became an

Episcopalian, a Cavalier, a Jacobite in sentiment, a Tory in politics, an antiquarian after a fashion, and a border *laird*? The reason is to be found in the fact that both on the paternal and maternal side he could trace his descent to ancient historical families of standing and repute. His ancestors the Scotts, Rutherfords, and Swintons, had borne large part in the wars and broils of the borders. Many of the doughty deeds of these bold and free-handed reivers partook, it must be confessed, but slightly of the heroic; but to the eye of Walter Scott they wore the hues of an attractive romance. Pride of family lay at the basis of his character, and indeed formed the pivot on which turned his worldly fortunes. He was careful to have the armorial bearings of his forefathers blazoned in due order on the compartments of the roof of his beautiful hall at Abbotsford. And not less did the circumstance of his origin from *gentle* border ancestors afford inspiration to the writer. As soon almost as he attained to conscious thought he made acquaintance with the border warriors, and his imagination was fed by the rude ballads which celebrated their feats and forays. In his earliest years passed at the farmhouse of his grandfather, Robert Scott, in a district rich in historical associations, the boy was thrown upon the society of his grandmother, who used to relate to him stories of Watt of Harden, Wight Willie of Aikwood, and Jamie Telfer. In ballad and lay, in after life, Scott delighted to picture the men through whose lineage he could trace his descent back to the fourteenth century, when his ancestry branched off from the great house of Buccleuch. Passages of border ballads the boy had by heart ere he attained his fourth year; and the first poetry he read was that of traditionary ballad and song. His lameness and delicate health in early boyhood, by depriving him of the society of his fellows, tended to strengthen habits of reflection and to deepen the effect on his mind of border lore.

Bishop Percy's "Reliques of Ancient Poetry" confirmed his early bias and contributed much to make Scott what he afterwards became as a poet and novelist. This work he first read at the age of thirteen in a garden at Kelso; and to no other book did he recur more frequently and with such enthusiasm. We have his own account of his delighted surprise to find just such legendary lore as he had been devoted to from infancy made the subject of "sober research, grave commentary, and apt illustration." Some specimens of the border ballads he had already stored in his juvenile note-books. Percy gave a new strength to a passion which, in after years, yielded a rich harvest of results. The same early influences, tastes, and associations, created by birth and locality, which made Scott a Cavalier, a prejudiced politician, and planted in him the desire to hold land and found a family, gave also to his writings that cast of originality and that rich flavour of nationality which is at once their distinction and charm. As to his boyish prejudices—which, indeed, never left him—referring to his friendly disputes with the tutor which his Presbyterian father had provided him, he says, "I, with a head on fire for chivalry, was a Cavalier, my friend was a Roundhead; I was a Tory, and he was a Whig. I hated the Presbyterians, and admired Montrose with his victorious Highlanders; he liked the Presbyterian Ulysses, the dark and politic Argyle." As was the boy, such was the man—witness the novel, "Old Mortality."

Scott having served an apprenticeship to his father,

and become an advocate, contrived to spend his vacations among the descendants of the Moss-troopers of the border, with the view of adding to his store of fragments of the ancient ballads which still existed among them. During seven successive years he made these border raids. Their first direct result was the "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border," published in 1802. One of the critics of that day remarked that the book contained the elements of a hundred historical romances. Lockhart calls that critic a prophetic one; and he points out that there is an endless variety of incidents and images in the text of these primitive ballads, and the notes which accompany them—the fruits of the raids—which have been expanded and emblazoned by his mature art in his great original productions. It is not to be overlooked in tracing the national influences which made Scott the writer he afterwards became, that very much contained in the metrical romances and novels afterwards produced lay in germ in the "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border." Translations from the German, and the production of several ballads, had employed the pen of the young advocate previous to the publication of that work. These last were his first attempts at original composition.

The success of the "Lay of the Last Minstrel," issued in January, 1805, decided its author to adopt literature as the main business of his life. In considering how and in what manner the genius of Scott was nurtured, it is interesting to observe the growth of this poem out of his ballad studies. In the introduction to the "Lay," written in 1830, we are told that it originated in a request of the young and lovely Countess of Dalkeith, who had asked him to write a ballad on a wild and rude legend of border *diablerie*, known as the story of "Gilpin Horner." In carrying out her ladyship's request, a single scene of feudal festivity in the hall of Branksome, disturbed by the pranks of a nondescript goblin, was, as Lockhart thinks, all Scott intended; "but his accidental confinement in the midst of a volunteer camp gave him leisure to meditate his theme to the sound of the bugle, and suddenly there flashes on him the idea of extending his simple outline, so as to embrace a vivid panorama of that old border life of war and tumult, and all earnest passions, with which his researches on the 'Minstrelsy' had, by degrees, fed his imagination until even the minutest feature had been taken home and realised with unconscious intenseness of sympathy, so that he had won for himself in the past another world, hardly less complete or familiar than the present. By such steps," adds Lockhart, "did the 'Lay of the Last Minstrel' grow out of the 'Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border.'"

From the feudal life of the border to a theme which touched on the general history of Scotland was an easy and natural step. "Marmion, a Tale of Flodden Field," appeared in 1808, and was avowed as an attempt to paint the manners of the feudal times on a broader scale than had been possible in the "Lay." Four lines from Leyden form its motto:—

"Alas! that Scottish maid should sing  
The combat where her lover fell;  
That Scottish bard should wake the string  
The triumphs of our foes to tell."

Before he had read a line of "Marmion," Constable paid one thousand pounds for the poem. This being known, gave occasion to Byron to satirise Scott



in his "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers." The period of the composition of his second great work was a happy one in the life of its author. The first portion was written at Ashestiel, a small mansion overhanging the Tweed, surrounded by beautiful scenery, where he had settled with his wife and young children. We may take a glimpse of Scott at work on "Marmion." When meditating his theme he would wander far from home, accompanied only by his dog, and return late in the evening. When engaged in the more stirring passages he took to horseback. To his son-in-law he said, in his declining days, when riding with him from Ashestiel to Newark, "Oh, man, I had many a grand gallop among these braes when I was thinking of 'Marmion.'" Some of the most energetic descriptions, and particularly that of the battle of Flodden, were struck out while he was with his yeomanry cavalry in the autumn of 1807. In the intervals of drilling, Scott used to delight in walking his powerful black steed up and down by himself on the Portobello sands, within the beating of the surge; and now and then he would plunge in his spurs and go off as if at the charge with the spray dashing about him. In "Marmion" it has been well said Scott painted "the capital, the court, the camp, the heroic old chieftains of Scotland, in colours instinct with a fervour that can never die; and dignified the most fatal of her national misfortunes by a celebration as loftily pathetic as ever blended pride with sorrow—a battle-piece, the noblest save in Homer."

The scene of the "Lady of the Lake," laid in the vicinity of Loch Katrine, catches its inspiration from the Highlands. Scott had been in the habit of visiting this region in his autumn vacations in the years of his apprenticeship to his father. The beautiful localities among which the action of the poem is placed were so deeply imprinted on his recollection that the writing of the poem was to him a labour of love. Its popularity on its appearance was unbounded. Jeffery praised it in the "Edinburgh Review," and thus made amends for his depreciatory notice of "Marmion." Tourists rushed to the Trosachs and Loch Katrine, and from that time it was observed that for a number of years the sum received for post duty in Scotland annually increased. It is a circumstance deserving attention in noticing how national influences and associations inspired the mind of Scott, that he had early ties with the Highlands. Relations of his own there living belonged to the Clan Campbell, whom he had visited in youth. His father had besides a numerous list of Celtic clients with whom also he came into intimate contact. The most noteworthy of these was Alexander Stewart, of Invernahyle, an enthusiastic Jacobite, who survived to recount in a vigorous old age his active experiences in the insurrections both of 1715 and 1745. Scott, when eight years of age, had seen this worthy in Edinburgh, in 1779, "in arms," on the occasion of the expected descent of Paul Jones. And the eager delight with which the law apprentice listened to the tales of the old man's early days procured for him an invitation to his residence among the mountains. Scott dwells with fond affection on the chivalrous character of Invernahyle; and we may conceive with what keen interest he heard him describe his broadsword duel with Rob Roy, his campaigns with Mar and Charles Edward, and his long seclusion (as pictured in the story of Bradwardine) within a rocky cave, situated not far from his own house, while it

was garrisoned by a party of English soldiers after the battle of Culloden. There, too, was the "grim old Highlander," the trusty henchman who had attended the chieftain in many a bloody field and perilous escape, and who was in the act of cutting down Colonel Whiteford with his Lochaber axe at Prestonpans when his master arrested the blow, an incident to which Invernahyle afterwards owed his forfeited life; and which is pictured in one of the most striking pages of "Waverley." The full flood of Scott's reputation as a poet was reached in the success of the "Lady of the Lake." In the composition of "Rokeby" he had neither the inspiration of the Borders nor of the Highlands, nor yet the incitement of Scottish story, and although that poem was written to sustain his position against the formidable competition of Byron, it has always been held inferior to its three predecessors. Leaving poetry, therefore, as no longer a realm where he was permitted to bear supreme sway, Scott betook himself to prose. In the "Lord of the Isles" he did once again seriously seize the minstrel harp, and in that poem there are passages not inferior to the former efforts of his genius. "The picture of the battle of Bannockburn," says Lockhart, "does not appear to me in the slightest particular inferior to the Flodden of 'Marmion.'"

As Miss Edgeworth had made Irish scenes and characters familiar to the English, so Scott essayed to discharge a like office in prose fiction for his country. He had travelled through most parts of Scotland, both Highland and Lowland, and was familiar with the elder as well as the more modern race, and had had from infancy, as he tells us, "unrestrained communication with all ranks of my countrymen, from the Scottish peer to the Scottish ploughman." "Waverley" and "Rob Roy" were next-of-kin and the legitimate successors to "The Lady of the Lake." It was because Scott's reproductions of his early recollections of Highland scenery and customs made so favourable an impression in that poem that he was led to attempt something of the same kind in prose. It was to the freshness and graphic force of the sketches of the Highlands contained in "Waverley" that it owed its popularity—a popularity which encouraged the author to delineate in succeeding prose fictions other phases of Scottish life and character. In "Guy Mannering" the then anonymous writer recurred to his loved border districts. Every trait of the character of the people of the Borders, and every feature of the country, he had long thoroughly known. His own personal associations, his antiquarian tastes, his humour, and keen observation of character, find a place in "The Antiquary." "The Antiquary" was Scott's favourite novel.

"It is," says Professor Masson, "as a painter of Scottish nature and Scottish life, an interpreter of Scottish beliefs and Scottish feelings, and a narrator of Scottish history, that Scott attains to the height of his genius." The same writer has even made the Scottish element in the Waverley novels matter of calculation. Of the entire twenty-nine he finds that no fewer than nineteen have their scenes laid wholly or in part in Scotland; that five have their scenes laid in England, one of which, however, "The Fortunes of Nigel," has much Scottish circumstance in it; and that two have their scenes on the Continent, one of which, however, "Quentin Durward," has a Scotchman for its hero; while three are Oriental in their ground and reference, of which one, "The

Talisman," is dedicated to the adventures of a Scotchman.

The cast of Scott's genius was historical. He lived in the past, he loved the past, especially the past of feudalism. Its dim and distant figures and their environments became to him instinct with life and reality. But little effort was required by his art to group and contrast these resuscitated characters, and to throw over them that charm of nature, that air of verisimilitude, which in even greater degree invests his purely imaginative creations. It has been objected that Scott's pictures and personages of feudal times, such as we have in "Ivanhoe" and other of his novels of the eleventh century, are not true to reality and the circumstances of the age. The objection is so far just, yet they are such pictures and personages as presented themselves to his imagination, and as suitable for his purpose of fictitious narrative, and may be accepted as approximations to truth and reality until some writer of deeper insight shall give us better. Scott knew Scotland; eye to eye and heart to heart he had come in contact with the Scottish people. His representations of Scottish character are therefore truthful and genuine. The Templars and Crusaders of feudalism, on the other hand, however grandly got up, and in a sense effective, have yet, like the characters of the stage, a certain air of unreality. The great service which Scott has done in realising the past and representing it to us as real and lifelike has been thus adverted to by Carlyle: "These historical novels have taught all men this truth, which looks like a truism, and yet was as good as unknown to writers of history and others till so taught; that the bygone ages of the world were actually filled by living men,

not by protocols, state-papers, controversies, and abstractions of men. It is a great service, fertile in consequences, this that Scott has done; a great truth laid open by him; correspondent indeed to the substantial nature of the man; to his solidity and veracity even of imagination, which, with all his lively discursiveness, was the characteristic of him." And speaking further of the character of his novels, Carlyle says: "No fresher paintings of nature can be found than Scott's; hardly anywhere a wider sympathy with man. From Davie Deans up to Richard Cœur-de-Lion; from Meg Merrilies to Die Vernon and Queen Elizabeth. It is the utterance of a man of open soul—of a brave, large, free-doing man who has a true brotherhood with all men. In joyous picturesqueness and fellow-feeling, freedom of eye and heart, or, to say it in a word, in general healthiness of mind, these novels prove Scott to have been among the foremost writers." National as Scott is, and drawing his purest inspirations from his nationality, he is yet, as a writer, universal. Indeed it may be said that to his nationality his universality is owing. With such wide and far-reaching acceptance of his works his fame is in no sense exclusively Scottish. Men of all lands acknowledge the charm of his writings, and willingly render tribute to his genius. While, therefore, Edinburgh, "mine own romantic town," will be the theatre of the Scott Centenary Celebration, English statesmen and English writers will also countenance the festival, for is it not to English literature that Sir Walter Scott belongs?

Chiefly of Scott's works have we yet spoken. More has to be said of the author himself, and of his influence in his native land, and in English literature.

J. H.



#### ORIGINAL PORTRAIT AND UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

OUR portrait of Sir Walter Scott is the *facsimile* of a sketch\* taken in the Parliament House, Edinburgh, by the late Robert Scott Moncrieff, Esq., then a young advocate at the Scottish Bar. The original drawing was shown to the great painter, Sir Henry Raeburn, the artist remarking that "the head seemed disproportionately high." "Ah, but," said Raeburn, "Scott had a story in his head more than any other man!" He said it was a capital likeness, and it has been thought excellent and characteristic by all who knew Sir Walter Scott. He is represented in his gown, as Clerk of Session.

We have also been favoured with many letters of Scott, which have not before been published,† a selection from which will be read with especial interest at the present time. The letters are generally careless in grammar, and even in spelling, to a degree that would horrify a modern Government Inspector, and would give consolation to many a schoolboy or anxious candidate in a competitive examination. We print them literally, not correcting the obvious faults of grammar or orthography.

\* Mr. Scott Moncrieff took a series of similar portraits, including the men of most note at the bar between 1816 and 1820—Jeffrey, Cockburn, Wilson, Lockhart, and the Judges, Lord Eldin (Clerk), Lord Hermand, and others. We are glad to hear that the whole series will probably be published.

† The originals are in the possession of members of the Scott-Moncrieff family, the Pringle family, and other friends of Scott.

To W. A. Pringle, Esq.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—I regret that my absence from home for ten minutes yesterday should have happened so unluckily as to deprive me of the opportunity of expressing in person my best and warmest good wishes for your success, not only in the voyage you are now about to undertake, but in the still longer and more eventful voyage of life. That you may be as fortunate in it as the chequered nature of this world will permit, is my earnest wish and hope; and I trust you will not be displeased if I add, not in the spirit of doubt but of confidence, that your own active exertions and the rectitude of conduct to which you have a hereditary claim, will be your best pilots through this difficult navigation.

If, with my kindest remembrances, you will deliver the parcel herewith sent, to my friend John Leyden, it contains, among other things, a letter of introduction, which I think you may derive some advantage from.

God bless you, my young friend.

Believe me, your sincere well-wisher,  
Edin., Thursday.

WALTER SCOTT.

(January or February 1811.)

To Dr. Leyden, Calcutta.

MY DEAR LEYDEN,—Your letter of the 10th January, 1810, reached me about ten days since, and was most truly welcome, as containing an assurance



of that which, however, I never doubted, the continuation of your unabated friendship and affectionate remembrance. I assure you Charlotte and I think and speak of you very often with all the warmth due to the recollection of our early days, when life and hope were young with all of us. You have, I hope,

turedly, accelerated by good living. His place is supplied in some sort by a very sensible Scotch terrier, but to have a dog whom I can love as much as Camp, I must bring back all that were with me, and you, my dear Leyden, among the foremost, in our woodland walks by Eske's romantic shore.



*Walter Scott*

long ere now, received my third poem, "The Lady of the Lake," which I think you will like, for auld lang syne, if not for its intrinsic merit. It have (*sic*) been much more successful than its predecessors, for no less than 25,000 copies have disappeared in eight months, and the demand is so far from being abated that another edition of 3,000 is now at press. I send (*sic*, for sent) you a copy of the 4to by a son of Mr. Pringle, of Whitebank, and his third son, William Pringle, being now on the same voyage to your shores, I beg to introduce him. He is one of the youngers mentioned in the Introduction to Marmion as a companion of my field sports. I take the opportunity to send you a little print, which I think you will set some value upon. It has just come out in London, and is reckoned very cleverly engraved. Poor old Camp, whom you will readily recognise, died about two years ago of old age, rather prema-

We heard of you by Mr. Purves, and Charlotte safely received your beautiful shawl, and I my creeze embalmed and envenomed, which I keep in my private drawer till some deed of *derring-do* shall call it forth. As Mr. Purves has probably returned to Calcutta he would tell you of our welfare, though not much more, as he could only breakfast with us one morning.

I have not yet received the Chinese affair, though Heber has forwarded the letter which accompanied it. I have no other connection with the "Quarterly Review" than as I am, with Ellis, Heber, and most of your old acquaintance, more partial to its politics than to those of your old friend Brougham in the "Edinburgh Review." But I will recommend the work to the conductor, and if Southey will take it on hand (to whom the missionaries have been obliged for the countenance they have hitherto received in

the "Quarterly"), I have no doubt your friends will be satisfied with the manner in which they are treated.

The capture of the Isles of Bourbon and France has now, I suppose, hermetically sealed our Indian Empire. In Spain matters continue in a wonderful state. The resistance of that wonderful people puts one in mind of the warrior in Ariosto who fought best after his head was cut off. In Portugal also our arms have acquired great reputation, and were you here, or could I find any such madcap willing to accompany, I would be there this spring to see the grand issue of this terrible contest.

I am very much concerned at the thoughts of your losing MSS. in the missing ships. I hope you have not been so unwise as to send originals, or at least without retaining transcripts. Consider, my good friend, how hard you earn your knowledge, and how very ill we can afford to lose the result of researches which cost you so much. So get a copying clerk or a copying machine with all despatch, and do not trust your original materials to the winds and waves.

You will expect news of European friends. Heber is in excellent health amassing books and discussing—[impossible to say whether the word is *magazines* or *magnums*—]magazines as usual. Ellis has quite recovered, that is, he is in the state of health in which you knew him, never a very robust one. James Ballantyne is increasing in fortune and bulk—his brother is now a bookseller here *meo auspicio*.

I expect this boy will call every moment, so I must close my letter. Mrs. Scott joins in sending you all the wishes of affectionate friendship. Pray take care of your health and come back to us soon. We will find an ingle-side and a corner of our hearth as warm for you as ever. My children are all well, and now I hear the door-bell.

Vale et nos ama.

WALTER SCOTT.

Edinburgh, 20 February, 1811.

Any attention you show the bearer pray place it to my account.

To Mrs. Pringle.

DEAR MRS. PRINGLE,—I will send my despatch for Lady Hood to-morrow. You will give me but due credit in thinking me very anxious to do any trifle in my power to promote the happiness of my young friends. We will wait on you on Friday with pleasure, and embrace the hospitality of Yair for the night—as they are now dark. Mr. Terry is still with us, and will be honoured in waiting upon you.

Believe me, Dear Madam,

Very truly and respectfully yours,

WALTER SCOTT.

To Lady Hood.

MY DEAR LADY HOOD,—This will serve to introduce to your ladyship's kind notice two young friends in whose welfare I am deeply interested, and for whom I would willingly exert the influence you flatter me with possessing in your friendship. They are sons of Mr. Pringle, of Whitebank, of one of the best families in the south of Scotland (that's for the daughter of *Caborfæ*) and of one of the *worthiest* (that's for *Lady Hood*). Besides near neighbourhood and very old acquaintance with Mr. and Mrs. Pringle, I have a particular interest in the young gentlemen themselves, who were much with me at Ashestiel and partners of my field sports; as I have endeavoured

formerly to give their characters in verse I will use the privilege of a foreign author, since your ladyship's leaving our hemisphere has unfortunately entitled me to claim it, so far as you are concerned, and refer you to a certain poem, entitled *Marmion*, Introduction to Canto II. They were then amiable and promising boys, nor have I any doubt that they are now in youth what I ventured to hope and prophesy for them. I therefore hope your continued friendship for me and those in whom I am interested will induce you to give my young friends as much of the light of your countenance as you can conveniently extend to them.

I do not know when nor how this letter may reach my valued friend, so I cannot add any news, unless that I continue the incorrigible *Tory* you left me, and since your ladyship has failed to make a *Whig* of me, I need hardly say I am likely to continue deaf to the voice of all future charmers, though they charm never so wisely. Mrs. Scott joins in offering her best wishes for your ladyship's happiness and good health, and we both entreat to be remembered to Sir Samuel.

Believe me, ever most respectfully, my dear Lady Hood,

Your honoured and most respectful,

WALTER SCOTT.

Ashestiel, 5 November, 1811.

The Honble. Lady Hood.

Favoured by Messrs. John and William Pringle.

To Mrs. Pringle.

MY DEAR MRS. PRINGLE,—Accept a few fine English acorns which I owe to the generosity of Lord Glenbervie and Lord Clarendon. They are, I believe, a rare commodity in our cold climate, and, with patience to boot, may repay in part the damage of last October's tempest. No one can wish more heartily than I that Mr. Pringle and you may see their youth, your kind and flourishing family their maturity, and a long succeeding train of descendants their decay and fall. I am planting whole navies at Abbotsford, and it is very diverting sending them about in a barrel or a bag. Charlotte joins me in kindest remembrances. The children are to say their own says to Charlotte and Davie, and,

I am ever, Dear Madam,

Faithfully and respectfully yours,

Edin., 4 Decr.

W. SCOTT.

(1811.)

To Mrs. Pringle.

MY DEAR MRS. PRINGLE,—It is with great pleasure I will wait upon you to-morrow, although I transgress the duty inculcated on us by our precepts by leaving undone the things that ought to be done. I am under the necessity of bringing along with me my present guest, Mr. Nicolson, a young artist, a very modest young man and of great merit. As we propose to return in the evening, and, indeed, cannot do otherwise, as I really leave some important business untransacted to have the honour of waiting upon you, Sophia will be of our party, but Mrs. Scott suffers so much from timidity in a carriage by night that she trusts you will accept her apology.

I am ever, Dear Mrs. Pringle,

Yours most respectfully and truly,

Abbotsford,

WALTER SCOTT.

Tuesday Evening.

To Mrs. Pringle.

MY DEAR MRS. PRINGLE,—I intended to have presented the enclosed volumes\* in person, but the inaccuracy of our hours and the plague we have had with work-people of various descriptions prevents our having that pleasure. We shall soon be back again at Ashestiel, when we mean to pay our respects at Yair. I sincerely hope Whitebank will not again have a visit of the gout, but if that unwelcome guest should again attend him, I hope that among the enclosed volumes he may find some talisman to charm away the time at least, if not the pain.

Charlotte offers her best respects, and, I am ever,

Dear Madam,

Yours very faithfully and respectfully,  
Ashestiel, 5th March. WALTER SCOTT.  
(1812.)

### CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

#### ELIZA FENNING'S CASE.

IN the series of papers in the "Leisure Hour" of 1870, upon Circumstantial Evidence, the notable case of Eliza Fenning was discussed. This girl, it will be remembered by our readers, was executed for murder, her guilt being proved by circumstantial evidence. The indictment was for "administering poison with intent to murder." A general feeling afterwards prevailed that she had been wrongly condemned, and this view having been taken by the writer of the article in the "Leisure Hour," the following memorandum has been sent by a legal correspondent:—

The writer was probably not acquainted with a remarkable testimony on the subject of Eliza Fenning's guilt. I will assume that he was not aware of it. Had he been so, he would no doubt have dealt less positively with the case, and discussed the testimony I will refer to with more impartiality than he can be expected to do now.

In the "Times" of 5th August, 1857, there appeared a letter from the Rev. J. H. Gurney, rector of St. Mary, Marylebone, on this very subject. Most of your readers know that the reverend gentleman (a son, I believe, of the late Sir John Gurney, one of the Barons of the Exchequer) was a nephew of Mr. William Brodie Gurney, the father of shorthand writers. The occasion of the letter was a trial at Edinburgh, on which the Dean of Faculty treated Eliza Fenning's case as clearly one of innocence.

The Rev. Mr. Gurney remarked that the position and character of the Dean of Faculty gave a weight to his statements which did not belong to other writers who had condemned the verdict as wrongful, and craved attention to the particulars which in an abridged form I append.

Mr. Gurney was in the company of his uncle, the shorthand writer, who was referring to his "notebook" of things worthy of remembrance, when (*inter alia*) he said: "Oh, here is something that will interest you about Eliza Fenning. A good deal of popular feeling was excited on the subject, many persons being persuaded that she was wrongfully convicted because she maintained her innocence in prison, and on her way to the scaffold."

From this notebook the Rev. Mr. Gurney publishes

an extract, which he prefaces with the remark that writers who are very capriciously tender of human life will still argue from this case to their conclusion that poisoners should not be convicted unless some one swears in the witness-box that he saw the poison bought, mixed, and given by the accused party. But at any rate, it is desirable that the candid and reasonable portion of the public should know how the case really stands, namely, that Eliza Fenning did confess her guilt to a minister of the gospel who visited her as a friend, though afterwards, when persons came about her who doubted her guilt, and gave her to understand that a reprieve might be hoped for, she changed her tone, and like Palmer and Patch went out of the world unconfessed.

The note in question is headed by a judicious remark,—

"Feeling as strongly as any one can do the objection to the infliction of death by a human tribunal, I still feel that there is a justice due to prosecutors and to jurymen, which in many instances has been disregarded."

Then comes this statement:—

"Shortly after her execution I heard that the Rev. James Upton, a Baptist minister, preaching in Church Street, Blackfriars Road, had visited her while under sentence of death, having been requested to do so. . . . I knew him to be a very excellent man—a man of great kindness of heart; I felt satisfied that he would not form a more unfavourable opinion than circumstances called for, and I took an opportunity of seeing him. He informed me that on his entering the cell Eliza Fenning, with great earnestness and tears, exclaimed that she was innocent of the crime imputed to her; that it was a cruel charge, and so on. That he replied, 'Eliza, I have not come here to talk to you about that. I do not mean to ask you whether you were guilty of that crime or not, but I come to you as a minister of Jesus Christ, hearing that you are probably very shortly about to appear before your Judge, to remind you that you are a sinner, and that unless those sins which you are conscious you have committed are repented of and pardoned, you can have no good hope for eternity.' . . .

"He said, 'I was somewhat affected, considering the situation of this poor girl about to suffer, and I talked to her earnestly, entreating her to seek mercy, and avoiding altogether the subject of her conviction. Before I had done she was quite melted down, and then it all came out.' I said, 'Do you mean that she confessed that crime?' 'Oh, yes,' said he, 'there was no reserve then. She confessed that it was all true, and I besought on her behalf the forgiveness of all her sins, and of that among the rest; and I hoped at the time that she had joined in that prayer, but I understand that after this she still persisted in assuring those who visited her of her innocence.'"

The Rev. Mr. Gurney then makes the following comment, which should be of great weight in those *post-mortem* verdicts of "not guilty" we so liberally deliver in opposition to judges and juries who had to perform a solemn duty, and who arrived on their oaths at another conclusion:—

"I should like, if you will allow me, to go on and speak of the fearful mischief often done within the walls of prisons by those who profess themselves the friends of doomed criminals.

"The questionings which go on there, the repeated solicitations to confess, the importance attached to

\* "Tales from the East."



persevering denials of guilt, must necessarily have a blinding effect on those who are thus beset.

"Numbers, I believe, will not confess, just because so much is made of confession. 'They want me to confess that they may feel secure in hanging me,' is the natural feeling at such times. 'The verdict does not satisfy them unless I admit its justice. I won't do that. If I deny my guilt stoutly, I shall, perhaps, be believed at last, and escape.' Thus, during the awful interval which is the murderer's brief preparation in time for eternity, he is balancing probabilities of escape, demeaning himself so as to make a favourable impression on bystanders, heaping up lies which, by possibility, he thinks may gain him long time for repentance hereafter—doing anything, in fact, but realising his position, and opening his ears to the godly counsel of those who desire to save his soul alive.

"If a criminal wishes to confess, there is no hindrance in his way.

"The penitent, without compulsion, will unlock the secrets of his heart to his spiritual adviser at any rate; and to the world at large I do not know that he is bound to proclaim his guilt. Importunity, on the other hand, will not wring out of the dogged malefactor what he is determined to conceal; and if he is to be softened at all, and brought to a better mind, it must be, not by repeating questions to which he has given one answer already, not by turning his thoughts back again to life, and suggesting the hope that oft-repeated asseverations will stay the uplifted hand of justice, but by going to work as good Mr. Upton did, speaking compassionately, as a sinner to a fellow-sinner, of our common guilt and the common redemption, appealing to the conscience, stating plainly that all transgressions, secret and open, must be repented of, and pointing to the Lamb of God, whose blood cleanseth from all sin, while to the impenitent and unbelieving, the hardened and self-justifying, it is declared plainly that there remaineth only judgment without mercy.

"It all came out, says the narrator, when he thus addressed the poor girl, whom he had known in happier days.

"Alas! she had other advisers afterwards, persons who meant kindly, but who did her fearful wrong. The confession was retracted. Hope was strong, doubtless, in that young bosom, and the efforts making on her behalf were sure to be reported to her. Between her cell and the scaffold the Ordinary 'stopped her for a moment,' says the 'Annual Register,' 'to ask her if in her last moments she had anything to communicate.' (She had better, surely, have been let alone; her tongue was not tied: she could speak then, as before, all she wished to speak. Who shall say that she might not hope, even then, that another lie might save her? It did make her a heroine and a supposed martyr with the populace.) 'She paused a moment, and said, "Before the just and almighty God, and by the faith of the holy sacrament I have taken, I am innocent of the offence with which I am charged."' By her own confession, at another time, she was a murderess; dying thus with a lie upon her lips, she was no penitent. My fear is, that the time of probation was lost, the faithful admonition forgotten, the course of repentance arrested, and the soul retained in the bondage of sin, because she was buoyed up with false hopes; and her fatal gifts of youth and beauty, coupled with protestations of innocence, made a party in her favour, who hoped,

up to the last hour, to extort a reprieve from government."

It should be borne in mind that, as no one but herself has ever, by a confession or otherwise, been proved to have been the guilty one, there is wanting the most material ground for traversing the verdict.

The trial is not so far back (your article says it dwells in the memories of many living) but that there are relatives and friends of Judge, Jury, and Home Secretary who would be pained at the imputation of "judicial murder" which the writer of your series seems to cast upon their memories. G. H.

## ROOKSTONE.

CHAPTER LIII.—LEROUX'S JOURNEY.

LEROUX started for Paris that night. Till now he had not disliked his master. Mr. Wolferston's altered manner had been sometimes very irritating; but Leroux could have borne unkind treatment better than hard words. It had been derogatory to be called a spy and a scoundrel; it had roused the tiger-blood inherent in some Frenchmen, and he vowed not to rest till he had taken revenge on Richard Wolferston. He was resolved to find Mademoiselle Janet, he was sure she would repay his expenses, still he must not be extravagant. So, after travelling all night, he got a hasty and cheap meal in Paris, and then went on to Rouen, tired as he was. His body was tired, but he had kept his brains awake by occasional cups of strong coffee. It seemed to him that the only way of tracing Janet would be to represent himself as a police emissary, and thus to gain a sight of the visitors' book at the different hotels. He did not find much difficulty in doing this; but he visited three of the principal inns in Rouen, and searched diligently through the arrivals of the past month, without finding any trace of Miss Wolferston. At the fourth hotel he tried a new system. He began to be afraid of identifying himself too much in one character in Rouen, he might draw the observation of the police on him. So when he presented himself at this fourth inn—and as he remarked its quiet well-to-do appearance he thought it the most probable of any to afford the information he wanted—he announced himself in search of some friends—English ladies. His notion was that if Miss Wolferston had followed her sister, she had come abroad alone with Thompson, for he had heard that English young ladies were far more independent than French ones; but still he would not commit himself to the description "a lady and her maid."

At this hotel he asked to see the proprietor himself, and a stout, blue-eyed Norman came out of a little side room into the entrance passage,—

"English ladies,—we have so many of them, monsieur."

"But these must have been here there is a fortnight; one of them a young lady, not tall, named Wolferston. I am sure that she has been here." The Norman's bold bald forehead wrinkled.

"English names are neither to be pronounced nor remembered," he said, and then he shrugged his shoulders, and added, "but what will you?"

Leroux paused. He had made up his mind to find traces of Janet here, and the man had not positively affirmed that he knew nothing about her.

"Is her name in your book?" he said. "She would of course write that herself."

"Mais oui," answered the host, with the peculiar Norman twang which is so unmistakable. "Monsieur can accompany me into the *salle*, and there it is probable we shall find the book."

Leroux could hardly restrain his eagerness while the Norman's fat fingers travelled slowly down the pages; his mercurial Parisian temperament prompted him to look for himself, but he thought it might create suspicion to do this unasked.

"Here is an English name—what barbarous names this people has." The Norman pointed to Mrs. Dawson's, about half-way down the column he had been examining.

Leroux bent down instantly; it seemed to him magical, when just below the name to which the Norman pointed, he read that of Janet Wolferston.

"La voilà! it is she, that is exactly the lady that I seek for. Is she here now?"

"We have no one who has been in the house a fortnight; I do not remember this lady, but at that period I think our visitors seldom stayed more than a night."

Leroux's eyes had travelled across the page, and he saw that though these names were entered as arriving from Paris, the place to which they were going was left blank. He was as wise as he was before; he had come to Rouen for nothing but the satisfaction of knowing that Janet had really been there.

The Norman was kind-hearted, spite of his reserve, and the blank disappointment in Leroux's face touched him.

"I do not talk to English ladies, monsieur," he said, smiling; "I don't understand their language, and the way they speak French is tiresome to me; but my wife, Madame Le Petit, she speaks English, and she likes to speak it, so she always talks all she can to foreigners; I will ask her to speak to you of these ladies."

Madame appeared in a well-fitting black dress and a muslin cap trimmed with blue; she was not pretty, but she had an indescribable charm of manner and appearance which betrayed to Leroux that she came from the capital.

His heart warmed to her at once, and he proceeded to question her about Miss Wolferston; he described Janet's appearance minutely, for Madame Le Petit had also shaken her head at the idea that she was likely to remember an English name.

When he came to the description of her face Madame's eyes brightened.

"Mais-oui-oui-oui, very certainly yes, monsieur; I have it now: a face and head of cameo—is it not so?—and a small person and blue eyes. Bah! I have been expecting you this long time, monsieur; but I thought you would be English; and, pardon, but you are not the person I imagined *mademoiselle* meant."

In his utter surprise, Leroux had nearly denied the possibility that Janet had described him, but he had lived a life of too much adventure to be easily thrown off his balance.

"Mademoiselle has then mentioned me to you?"

"But yes"—she felt in her pocket—"Bon, I must look in my *armoire*, it will be put away there. But *mademoiselle* gave to me a *billet* for the gentleman which should inquire for her."

A letter! He contented himself with a bow; while Madame trotted up-stairs again. He dared not speak,

for fear of compromising in some way the false character he was representing.

Miss Wolferston had expected a friend and had left a letter for him. Bon! In this letter she would of course have told her friend where she was going; the friend had not come, and Leroux—he plainly had the best right to know Janet's movements, when he had so important a secret to communicate to her. The letter was therefore his.

It was rather disconcerting when Madame reappeared with a letter in her hand to find that she had mastered the address.

"But this is not for a French gentleman, it is for Monsieur Wenlock."

Leroux's ready wit helped him now; to take his real character would sound more probable than any invention.

"You are right, Madame, I am not Monsieur Wenlock, and yet I came for that letter; I am a servant, the gentleman is my master; he is at Dieppe, and he have sent me for Miss Wolferston's letter that he may know where he is to join her. She is, as you probably have heard, making the voyage of La Normandie to find her sister. She did not find her sister here, did she?"

"No; but she has demanded if a lady of her name have been here—"

"C'est juste—it is that," said Leroux, triumphantly; "her sister is married to her cousin, so they are of the same name."

And then, with a profusion of thanks and bows, he put the letter in his pocket and walked away, before the black-eyed hostess had half tired of talking to him.

"Angélique," said her husband, gravely, "hast thou not given up that letter too easily?"

Madame was thinking so herself, but then it was quite another matter to own to her husband that she had been in the wrong, so she shrugged her shoulders scornfully.

"Pierre, go to thy accounts, my angel, and leave me to manage my affairs."

Leroux stepped into the nearest *café*, and opened the letter. In it, as he expected, Janet told Captain Wenlock the next place to which she and Mrs. Dawson were going. He did not quite understand the letter, but still he made out that Captain Wenlock was about to become Miss Wolferston's husband; and it seemed to him that several sentences in it showed that the writer was very anxious to get back to London.

"I have no time to lose," he said.

He went back again to Mantes, there he again found a letter which he appropriated; but at Evreux, the next town to which he was directed, the mistress of the hotel was a Scotchwoman, and she gave him to understand, in broad Glasgow accent which sorely puzzled him, that he was not the person to whom the letter she had in charge was addressed. Here was a dilemma; however, he must calculate Janet's probable route by the towns she had visited thus far.

For three days and three nights he travelled incessantly. He had the faculty of sleeping as soundly in a railway carriage as in his bed; and although some part of the way had to be accomplished in a diligence, he managed to sleep even in that jolting progress.

At last he found himself, in the early morning, in Caen. He had visited all the large towns of Normandy, and several in Brittany. Once or twice he

had again found traces of Janet and her companions, but here he was completely baffled.

Worn out and disappointed, he turned into an inn to get some refreshment. He ate and drank heartily, and when he had done this, it seemed to him that he must take some repose—he was so utterly overpowered with weariness. He sat at the table dozing, while the garçon cleared away the remains of his meal; and when the man asked him if he should bring coffee, he said, "Yes," for the excuse of sitting still a little longer. He was soon sound asleep.

Some loud talking roused him. Two English people, a lady and gentleman, had come into the *salle* and were seated opposite to him, waiting for their breakfast.

"It is one of the most absurd notions that can come into any one's head."

"But, my dear," said the wife, fondling her little plump hands, "that is exactly why it might come into Janet Wolferston's. Mrs. Webb tells me she grows more and more eccentric."

"Well, it beats me." Mr. Buchanan settled his collar, and jingled his knife against a wine-glass to hurry breakfast. "I think twelve mortal hours from Havre to Southampton quite long enough, without enduring three hours beforehand in a wretched little cockle-shell of a French steamer. River passage, indeed! I know what the mouth of a river is; the fresh water's uneasy at mixing with the salt, or some rubbish, and the consequence is that everybody else is made extremely uneasy."

"I should not have recognised Janet if Mrs. Dawson had not waved her hand so vehemently at me. I was just looking round me at the Basin, and all that, and then I said to them—"

Leroux could hardly wait till the round mouth had closed, and then he plied Mrs. Buchanan with questions. All his fatigue had vanished: his veins seemed filled with new fresh blood, as he listened to her tidings.

Miss Wolferston was on her way back to England. Mrs. Buchanan told him that she had left Caen at nine o'clock by the "Orne" steamer, bound for Havre; but, to his joy, Leroux remembered that the steamer for Southampton did not start till nearly midnight. If he went to Honfleur by rail, and thence on to Le Havre, he could easily be in time to intercept Janet's return to Southampton, for he did not believe Miss Wolferston would go back to England if she knew her sister was still in France.

#### CHAPTER LIV.—FOUND.

MRS. DAWSON was tired out. Secretly she felt very wrathful against her companion; but there was something in Janet's earnest, devoted love for her sister, in the uncomplaining patience with which she bore all these repeated disappointments, that subdued her aunt's discontent from much outward expression.

"Although I think she might have known her own mind better in respect of time; for as to gowns, I brought but two with me—one on, one off—and with no one to brush or see to me; I'm ashamed to look at myself in the glass with my clothes on, they so stand in dust, not to speak of the unmentionable horrors which, take every care you will, gowns—the skirts of them, I should say—have a habit of contracting in travelling abroad. Oh, dear me, and bonnet strings! I might buy new ones, to be sure, so I might; but then Janet is so

on the high stilts, thinking of nothing all day long but Mary, I do believe that if I were to ask her to go into a shop to buy bonnet strings she'd lose her opinion of me for ever, and if I had 'em I could not sew them on without Mitchell to fix them. I wonder what Mitchell will think when she sees these; they're more like haybands than ribbon, twisted into wisps, and so faded that they are as much like dirty white as lavender. Oh, dear me, it is a comfort to think we shall be at home to-morrow. I say, Janet" (she saw her niece approaching), "arn't you glad we came out here? it was just seeing that said in 'Murray' made me propose it, 'Frascati, outside the walls on the seashore'—it is so pleasant, and the young trees are so lovely, and the sea looks beautiful through them; come and sit here, child, the air will do you worlds of good."

They had left Caen that morning, and had reached Havre about twelve o'clock, and had come out to Frascati at once, as Mrs. Dawson declared it impossible to stay in Havre. The weather was warm for the end of April, and it was very pleasant to sit out in the gardens within sight of the sea.

"I've left my tatting in that little room where we breakfasted," said Mrs. Dawson; "or, I should say, where we looked at our breakfast. If ever I trust myself in such another morsel of a boat as that 'Orne' steamer I deserve to go down in it. Pigs and cows, too! Oh, Janet, it seems a week ago; it was dreadful to feel so ill for nothing. I shall let Mary know some day the list of sufferings I've gone through for her—dear me, dear me!"

Mrs. Dawson went away to find her tatting. Janet sat still looking out over the sea. Had she done all she could? Was she not giving up this search because she could no longer bear Henry's silence, rather than because she had no hope of finding her sister? She did not know. She was ready to give up her own life, her own happiness entirely, if she could bring Mary's husband to confess the truth about the will, and her sister's beseeching words had inspired her with the conviction that Mary too suspected Richard. But though this conviction and her obedience to her mother's dying words had led her on thus earnestly, Henry's obstinate silence was very hard to bear. For several days after leaving Paris she had not written to him, in the hope that he had returned to London and would follow her when he received the note she had left for him; but when day after day of her fruitless quest passed away, and Henry neither came nor wrote, her heart grew sadly heavy, and it became very hard work to pursue her inquiries with the same zeal with which she had begun them. Had she been alone it would have been an easier task, but Mrs. Dawson, although very kind, was a wearisome companion from her perpetual questioning.

Besides this, and the weariness of actual fatigue, Janet was heart-sick too from constant disappointment. Here and there she had got a glimmer of hope; but this had soon proved fallacious. She had not found decided proof of Mary's presence in any of the towns she had visited. And now, as she sat looking out over the sea, she confessed to herself that she had spent all this time in a fruitless search for Mary; and meantime she had deeply offended Henry. She had written to him twice within the last few days, and had asked him to write to her at Havre; but they had inquired to-day at the post-office without success.

She must go home, she had no right to grieve and



wound him thus; and yet in every letter she had asked his sanction to her journey.

She had suspected Richard Wolferston of fraud; but it never occurred to her to suspect Mrs. Webb's honesty in the matter of delivering her own letters to Henry Wenlock. The greatest comfort she could give herself was, that she might have missed his letters on the road.

Once she thought of writing to Mrs. Webb to explain her continued absence and to ask for news; but she could not bring herself to confess to her cousin that she had not received one letter from Henry since her departure. It was over now, she should be in London to-morrow morning.

A flock of school-girls came trooping back from the beach; happy, bright-faced creatures, who looked as if the genial sunshine, flooding the garden and burnishing the wide-spreading sea into a sheet of trembling gold, was their natural element.

Janet sighed as they passed her, they reminded her of Mary.

"I have found you at last, mademoiselle."

Janet started. Leroux was standing beside her, he had come out of the hotel while she sat watching the young girls.

She was too much surprised to speak, and there was no need; Leroux was eager to tell his story. "Mademoiselle, I have been following you every day since I leave your sister, and I begin to think you were gone to London, but this morning at Caen I hear certain news, and I have come as fast as possible. Madame Wolferston have asked me to go and bring you to her, and I have promised I will do so, and then Mr. Wolferston become very angry, and I leave him and madame at Mont Doreles-Bains, which is in Auvergne, mademoiselle, so—so far off; and then I have voyaged day and night too: I never stop till I find you to give you the message of madame."

Janet listened attentively.

"Then do you think if we were to leave this place at once I should find my sister at Mont Dore?"

Leroux looked at her for a moment with keen disappointment.

"Ma foi!" he said, to himself; "what egotists are these English! She does not say 'Thank you a hundred times, Leroux;' or 'What can I do to recompense the zeal and perseverance you have shown?' She but asks for her sister; it is insupportable." Then aloud, "Ah, mademoiselle, I do not think it; monsieur will at once guess that I shall bear you the message of his wife, and he will travel quickly from Auvergne."

"Well, then, what is to be done?"

Janet did not say this as if she were helpless and needed counsel. A look in the Frenchman's face told her he had yet more to communicate.

Leroux bowed; it soothed his wounded self-love to be appealed to.

"Mademoiselle will return to Paris, and stay there; and I will watch the railway station for Auvergne. I am sure that Madame Wolferston cannot voyage quickly, and I do not think they will reach the capital before to-morrow; but, mademoiselle, if I could be sure of seeing you alone and not having some interruption there is a secret of importance I will confide to you."

It seemed to Janet that already this man had been admitted too freely to the confidence both of herself and her sister. She answered very stiffly:

"Anything you have to say can be said here; but

if the secret concerns your late master, I had rather not hear it."

She looked round anxiously for Mrs. Dawson, but the poor lady was still in the sitting-room seeking her tiny fragment of tatting under a heap of hats and railway rugs. Leroux looked for a moment before he answered.

"Mees Wolferston," he said, and a very sarcastic smile curved his moustaches, "you are a very good young lady indeed, and you think all the world like yourself. Bon! it is pleasant for young ladies to think so; but, mademoiselle, if you think it is to tell you where is your sister I come all this long way, from Auvergne to Paris, from Paris to Normandie—and, mademoiselle, if I had not this morning found you, I had also gone from Normandie to London—you make a mistake, the most great mistake of your life. No, Miss Wolferston, I have been insult—insult in a manner which is insupportable to my honour"—he tapped his chest vehemently, and drew himself to his full height—"and the person who have insult me is not an honest man as I am; no, mademoiselle; he is an impostor, a thief; he has taken to himself the inheritance of others."

"Good gracious me, Janet, what is all this rhodomontade this man is saying?"

Leroux had seen Mrs. Dawson coming down the steps of the veranda into the garden; but he felt what he was saying far too deeply to be stopped by any scruple of being overheard. His great fear had been that Janet would rise up and go away before he ended. He gave her no chance of replying to Mrs. Dawson; he pulled a roll of paper out of his pocket, and handed it to Miss Wolferston.

"I make no accusation I cannot prove; there is the proof of what I have said." He said this rapidly in French, then he folded his arms as only a Frenchman can, and stood looking at Janet.

She was very pale, for she had at once guessed what it was that she held in her hand—the fatal will, which had hastened her mother's death; but, with all the recollections that crowded back on her, she did not lose her presence of mind, nor her memory of Mr. Painson's words, that Richard Wolferston was not a man to be driven by any publicity to confess the fraud, if he had committed it.

"Indeed," she said, quietly. "Aunt Dawson, this person has business to settle with me. You can follow me," she said to Leroux, and she walked quietly along the garden to a bench opposite the one on which she had been sitting.

## July.

HIGH climbs the Summer; lo! the Julian sun  
Flings o'er the Northern pole perpetual day,  
Drives Night's dark shadows southward far away,  
Forgets his setting—round the heavens to run,  
While half his risings are rolled up in one:  
Ecliptic wonder! what gigantic play,  
What conjunx of the spheres could lead astray?  
This orb, wide bouncing, ere the games were done?  
What change of time to sow, and time to reap,  
What summer-heats, what snows of winter, keep,  
Down from the Deluge, their alternate courses!  
While on her axis Earth inclines oblique,  
God in the seasons doth in mercy speak,  
Or sweep the elements with destructive forces.

W. LANGFORD.

**JOURNALISM IN LONDON AND THE PROVINCES.**—Concerning the position of the metropolitan press, the *Economist* says:—"Unless we are greatly mistaken—and we have watched the process for many years and have no interests to blind our judgment—a great change is passing over the position of the Metropolitan Press. It is decidedly and visibly losing influence, vigour, and circulation. The number of daily papers published in London declines, their proprietors are less energetic, and the regard of the mass of the people for their opinions daily tends to diminish. We are inclined to believe that, apart from accident, the fall of the London Press and the rise of the Provincial Press will continue until we see something like the state of things in America, where each journal, however good, finds geographical limits to its circulation, and the journals of the greatest city have no universal influence and only a nominal precedence in the newspaper world. In what way that change will affect the profession, we must leave for future discussion; but one of its main results must, we conceive, be to increase the power of journalism in the aggregate while diminishing the power of any individual journal, a change which in England will be a very great one indeed;—and another to make provincial opinion—the opinion of the great trading cities—much more influential than that somewhat overcautious and feeble, but acute, set of ideas usually described as 'London opinion.' There is crudity very often in the opinion of the provinces, but it is masculine and broad, which opinion, at present, in London certainly is not."

**SIZE OF HEADS.**—The *Philadelphia Ledger* says that hat and cap manufacturers in different quarters of the United States use different sizes of hats and caps as standard sizes. Boston and the Eastern States use the smallest sizes, New York and the Middle States use the medium to largest sizes, and Chicago and the Western States require the largest sizes. Goods manufactured for one market cannot be sold for the other, only in exceptional cases. The South use a shape peculiar to themselves and of large size.

**AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS' CONFERENCE.**—A meeting of agricultural labourers was held lately in a barn, at a small village in Herefordshire (Adforton), for the purpose of comparing notes as to their condition. After a rather lengthy speech by the Chairman, a schoolmaster, the labourers had their say. A man named Pugh said he received 9s. a week, and "the run of a pig," with his cottage; but the pig he seemed to consider rather a disadvantage than otherwise, for he stated that "a pig won't get his own livin', especially such a summer as last summer;" and then he proceeded to show what became of his wages. He said first of all he paid 6s. for bread; then there was a shilling for the pig, "for you can't keep a pig under a shillin';" and there was another shilling for shoes, which was eight shillings. Then there was sixpence for the children's schooling, and meat and sugar had to come out of the remaining sixpence. He suggested that if they all put their shoulders to the wheel they should be able to obtain 2s. 6d. a day. Another labourer, John Pearce, said he had six children, his wife, and himself to keep out of 9s. a week; his shoemaker's bill last year was £3 4s. 11d.; and, he asked, how was he to pay that.

**REIGNS OF THE POPES.**—Next to St. Peter, who is said in foolish legend to have reigned 25 years, the longest terms of occupation of the Roman See are as follow:—St. Silvester, 23 years, 10 months, 27 days; St. Leo the Great, 21 years, 1 month, 13 days; Adrian I., 23 years, 10 months, 27 days; St. Leo III., 20 years, 6 months, 16 days; Alexander III., 21 years, 11 months, 22 days; Urban VIII., 20 years, 11 months, 21 days; Clement XI., 20 years, 3 months, 25 days; Pius VI., 24 years, 8 months, 14 days; Pius VII., 23 years, 5 months, 6 days. But Pius IX. has outreached the longest of these; and if he lives over the 24th of August he will have been the longest reigning of all the 256 popes.

**CHIMNEY ON FIRE.**—Few occurrences to which a householder is liable are more annoying than a "chimney on fire." The first intimation he generally receives of the fact is a loud shriek from the kitchen, where the cook—whose negligence in not having the chimney swept at the proper time has been the cause of the calamity—is found in a hysterical condition, supported by the housemaid. Then a crowd assembles in front of the house, who amuse themselves by bawling out "Fire!" at the top of their voices. Then the sound of horses galloping is heard in the distance, and the engines begin to arrive; men

with helmets knock imperiously at the door; a hoarse murmur is heard from the mob, who are indignant that the house is not in flames, and in the meantime the grocer's man, who happens to be whiling away an hour or so in the kitchen, has climbed upon the roof, poured a pail of water down the chimney, and the conflagration has been subdued. The troubles of the householder are not, however, extinguished with the fire, for he is summoned before a police magistrate and has to pay a fine for his negligence. From a return which has just been issued by order of the House of Commons it seems that the total number of chimney fires in the Metropolis District reported during the past year was 2,690. The number of cases in which penalties were imposed was 1,918—the remaining 772 being described as "Poor, left, insufficient evidence," etc. In 782 cases the maximum penalty was enforced, and in 1,136 cases less than the maximum; 1,253 penalties were enforced summarily before the justices during the year. It further appears that there is an officer who is styled "Receiver of Chimney Fire Penalties," who receives a salary of £200 a year, and that the incidental and other expenses of his office amounted during the year to £257 11s. 11d. He employs no agents, and apparently does all the work himself. If in addition to receiving the penalties he would devise some improved method of sweeping chimneys he would be a public benefactor; there can be no doubt that, however cruel it was to employ climbing-boys, they did their work far more effectually than it is done at present by machinery. The long brooms used by chimney-sweepers fail to dislodge the layers of soot which accumulate, especially in old-fashioned chimneys, and which are the cause of many of the fires that occur.—*Full Mall Gazette*.

**CREWE AND THE L. AND N.W. RAILWAY.**—A correspondent at Crewe writes: "It is stated in the article on Crewe in May part that the London and North-Western Railway Company give their workmen an annual excursion, which I assume is meant 'free.' If the writer of the article could hear the comments of the workmen he would see he had made a mistake. The privileges accorded to workmen travelling at reduced fares are these. They are allowed to travel at half the return fare on Saturdays only, except in cases of sickness or death, when they can avail themselves of it any day of the week. At holiday times—Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide—this privilege is extended to the wives of the workmen, and to such members of their families as permanently reside with them; but as to free excursions, it is quite out of the company's calculations. There was a time when the company, more liberal than at present, gave the children of their schools an annual free excursion, and afterwards extended it to the children of the other Sunday schools in the town, but those days have long gone past, and if workmen get up an excursion—which they frequently do—I am not aware that they pay any less than people from the neighbouring towns.—B."

**WESLEY'S BIBLE.**—At a New England Camp-meeting last summer, the Rev. Wm. F. Boole, of New York, in a brief address, "loaned" to the President, for the use of the camp-meeting, the ancient copy of the Bible used by Samuel Wesley and his son, the founder of Methodism, John Wesley. The volume is a folio pulpit Bible, and was used in the Church of Epworth in England, of which the Rev. Samuel Wesley was rector, and afterwards by his son, John Wesley, who occasionally preached there. It was the pulpit Bible from 1695 to 1796. It was given by the church to the Rev. Robert Aitkin, who is still living in Cornwall, England. He gave it Mrs. Smith, the youngest daughter of Adam Clarke. She sold it to Mr. George J. Stevenson, who is known as the Methodist antiquarian, who sold it through Philip Phillips to Mr. Boole, who is the present owner of the interesting and valuable relic.

**AUBER, ROSSINI, MEYERBEER.**—Only seven years ago visitors to Paris might have seen, day after day, at certain hours, taking their "constitutional" walk on the Boulevard des Italiens, the three greatest dramatic composers of the age—Meyerbeer, Rossini, and Auber. Now all are gone. Meyerbeer died in 1864, Rossini in 1868, and Auber in 1871 ("last of the giants").

**ANGLO-INDIAN ARMY.**—According to the last returns, there were 61,481 European officers and soldiers in India, and 132,461 native officers and soldiers, and these figures added together gave one man for every thousand of the population of British and feudatory India.

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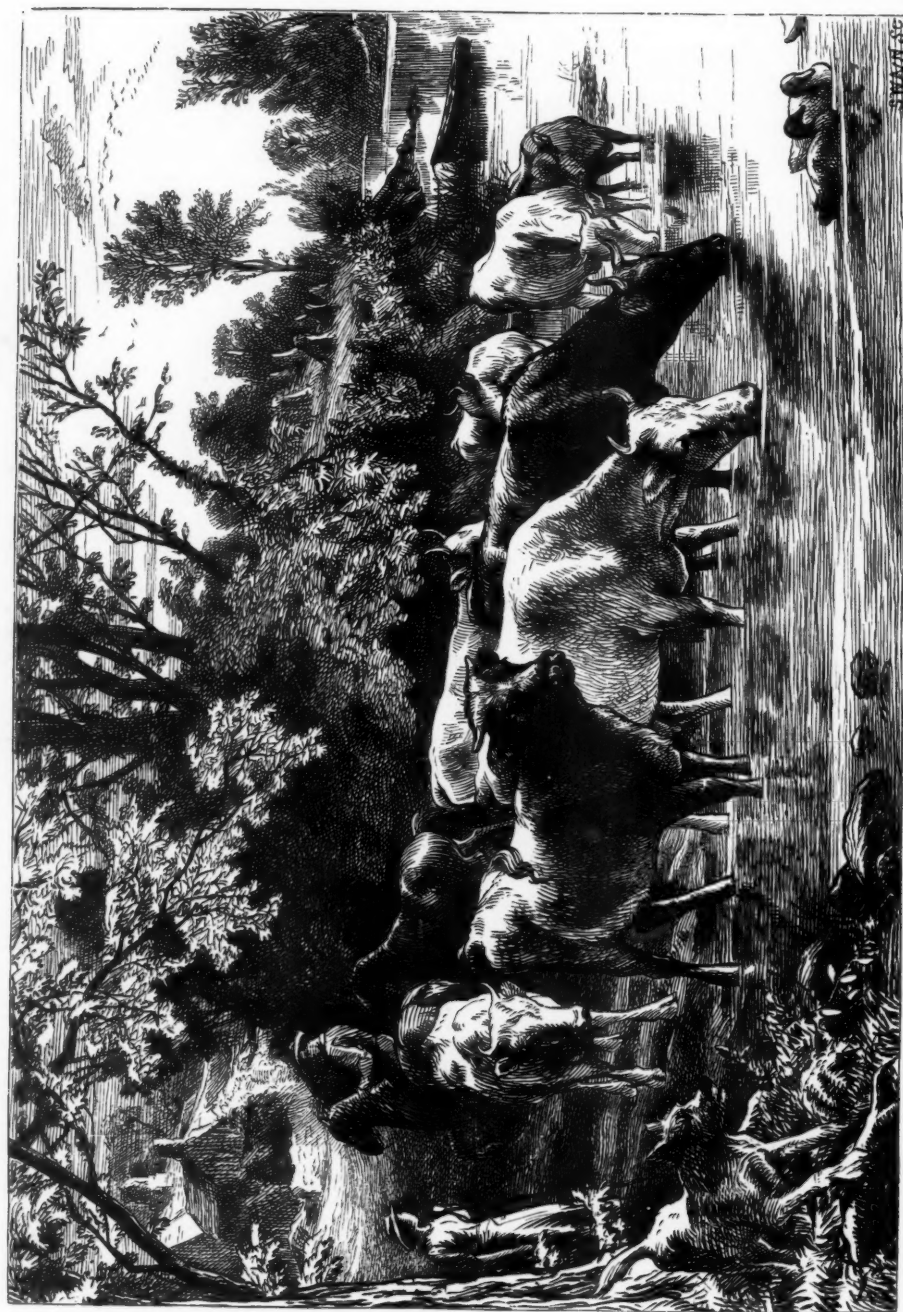
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